OPEN
LEARNING
AGENCY

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OLA MISSION

TO ENHANCE THE PERSONAL GROWTH OF INDIVIDUALS AND THEIR PERFORMANCE IN SOCIETY AND IN THE WORKPLACE THROUGH THE PROVISION OF HIGH-QUALITY, FLEXIBLE LEARNING PRODUCTS, SERVICES, AND SYSTEMS.

105-01386/

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

William C. Harlan
President and CEO

The Open Learning Agency (OLA) met a number of challenges this past year, but as with every previous year, the ongoing stories of success and recognition are what stand out in 2002/2003, and we are only too happy to tell the world how OLA has touched many lives.

As we let go of some lines of business, we learned to focus on our core operations, solidifying our commitment to the students and clients who would follow us through the transition. OLA employees demonstrated a loyalty and dedication beyond the call of duty, and our partnerships grew to the benefit of new customer groups.

As we move forward with the transition of the organization in 2003/2004, OLA's purpose, legacy, and relevancy will remain. For that, I continue to be proud.

The Government of British Columbia (BC) created the Open Learning Institute (OLI) in 1978 in response to the Winegard Commission report, which called for greater access to college and university education for BC's rural areas. At that time, OLI's mandate was to develop post-secondary courses and programs for distance delivery throughout the province.

In 1980, the provincial government established Knowledge Network as BC's public educational broadcaster. In 1988, OLI and Knowledge Network merged to form the Open Learning Agency (OLA), an organization dedicated to serving learners of all ages through a variety of alternative delivery methods.

Today, OLA has grown to include not only a college, a university, and an educational television station but also many other innovative programs and services. It is recognized provincially, nationally, and internationally as a developer and provider of flexible and accessible learning opportunities.

Over the past two years, the Ministry of Advanced Education (AVED) has been examining OLA's programs as part of the BC Government's Core Services Review. As a result, in October 2002, AVED announced that OLA's core services would be transferred to another public post-secondary institution or institutions in the province. Further to this announcement, the Open Learning Agency Repeal Act received Royal Assent on November 21, 2002, providing a legislative framework for the transition of OLA's programs and services over the next two years. The transition is scheduled to be complete by September 2004.

BRITISH COLUMBIA OPEN UNIVERSITY

OLA's British Columbia Open University (BCOU) is a public university and a member institution of the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada. It offers recognized courses and certificate, diploma, and degree programs in Arts and Science, Business, Health Science, and Technology. BCOU also partners with other educational institutions, professional bodies, industries, and businesses and is a founding member of the Canadian Virtual University.

Seven years ago, Marie McDonnell received a diploma in Marketing from an institute in British Columbia but knew her educational journey was not over. She moved to Calgary for a full-time job in the travel industry, and a few years later realized that not having a degree was holding her back at work.

"I knew I would be limited as to the management level I could achieve. Also, I wanted to ensure I would never again be in a negative position when it came to salary review—something I had come across in the past due to the lack of a degree," explains McDonnell.

With a full-time workload and a schedule that did not permit her to commit to night school, McDonnell looked into her options. She found that BCOU would provide her with a full transfer of credits from her diploma. Also, the flexibility of distance education meant she could fit her schooling around her schedule. Living in another province was not an issue.

At BCOU, McDonnell could work through her courses at her own pace and stay motivated enough to finish the entire program. She says finding the right balance between work, school, and life was key, especially with a challenging degree program like BCOU's Bachelor of Business Administration.

"A BCOU degree is well recognized and just as hard, if not harder, to earn as one from a bricks and mortar university."

In May 2003, BCOU honoured over one thousand certificate, diploma, and degree graduates at its annual Celebration of Learning ceremony. With a successful completion rate well above the industry average, BCOU has a strong history of providing real-world skills to students to ensure that they find their educational experience rewarding and relevant.

For more information on the British Columbia Open University:

Web	www.bcou.ca
Email	student@bcou.ca
Phone	604-431-3300
Toll-free	1-800-663-9711

KNOWLEDGE NETWORK

Knowledge Network is British Columbia's public educational broadcaster. It acquires unique, high-quality programs and productions from Canada and around the world and produces television programs and new media on issues that are of interest and value to the people of BC. Knowledge Network works with educational, corporate, and government partners to provide unique learning opportunities on-air and online for target audiences.

In 2002/2003, Knowledge Network received several outstanding achievements for its innovative programming. For the second consecutive year, *BC Parent* magazine named Knowledge Network Best Television Station for Children's Programming, and in May it was honoured with its first LEO Award in the category of Best Documentary for Nature, Environment, Adventure, Science, and Technology for Hiding from the Wind.

Knowledge Network proudly supported Canadian, especially British Columbian, producers by granting pre-licence commitments totalling $309,100. Dedicated Partners in Knowledge donated $1.6 million toward programs and productions such as The Leading Edge, an innovative series profiling leading researchers at BC's post-secondary institutions, and FAS: When the Children Grow Up, a documentary exploring the stories of adults living with fetal alcohol syndrome and fetal alcohol effects.

In continuing to work with new media initiatives that support television programming, Knowledge Network provided special features on www.knowledgenetwork.ca, including webcasts, in-depth Knowledge Tools, and on-demand video presentations of programs and exclusive interviews with producers and hosts.

In 2002/2003, Knowledge Network met all technical and programming standards established by the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) and exceeded its Canadian content commitments. Its broadcast day comprised 64% Canadian content with 59% in the evening broadcast period. Knowledge Network reached an average of 1.3 million viewers per week in BC (BBM Canada).

For more information on Knowledge Network:

Web	www.knowledgenetwork.ca
Email	partnership@knowledgenetwork.ca
Phone	604-431-3222
Toll-free	1-877-456-6988

OLA SKILLS CENTRES

OLA Skills Centres meet the employment assessment, counselling, education/ training, and job placement needs of clients who are unemployed or in career transition. Located in communities throughout the province, the Skills Centres offer programs and services that are tied to local client, industry, and labour market needs, with an emphasis on delivering programs and services through public and private partnerships.

In 2002/2003, all OLA Skills Centres experienced a 20% increase in client activity, including a doubling of client job placements. 16,949 clients registered, of which 2,810 received training, and 7,656 obtained employment. This kind of growth is indicative of a real need for job-ready training, but it is also a sign that the Skills Centres have been accepted into BC communities, often representing the only provider of job-ready skills training in some areas.

In 2003, the OLA-managed Learning Centre at Teck Cominco Metals Ltd. Trail Operations won top national honours for the annual Canada Post Literacy Awards, Business Leadership competition. This prestigious award recognizes the Learning Centre in Trail for demonstrating its commitment to supporting literacy at all levels through innovative design and programming.

The Centre relies on the requests of Teck Cominco's employees to establish its course offerings, which reflect the outside interests of these employees rather than focus on professional development. All courses are free and offered only to employees of the Trail Operations.

Since 1998, 52% of Trail's Teck Cominco employees have taken courses. This translates to 945 people who have completed 3,534 workshops and courses. Over 100 titles have been offered, and 20 employees have completed their secondary education. A number of employees have also taken post-secondary distance courses through BCOU.

This most recent honour represents the third such award for the Centre, which won the Conference Board of Canada Award for Excellence in Literacy, Large Business category in 1999 and an American Society for Training Development Citation for Excellence in Workplace Learning and Development in 2000. OLA Skill Centres have a history of developing award-winning programs, as they also won the Conference Board of Canada Award for Business Education Partnerships in 1995.

As part of the BC Government's Core Services Review, Skills Centres' operations will be winding up in 2003, and the Centres will be ultimately phased out by March 2004. The BC Government is in the process of preparing for the provision of replacement service providers.

For more information on OLA's Skills Centres:

Web www.ola.ca/skcentres
Email info@ola.ca
Phone 604-431-3000
Toll-free 1-800-663-1663

INTERNATIONAL CREDENTIAL EVALUATION SERVICE

OLA's International Credential Evaluation Service (ICES) provides educational evaluation services to individuals, employees, associations, and regulatory bodies. ICES reports provide a comparison of international and Canadian credentials to facilitate processes of employment, immigration, professional licensure, and academic admission.

Rosa Arcilla earned a Bachelor of Medical Technology in the Philippines. After moving to Canada, Arcilla was employed as a secretary with a medical research firm when her supervisor suggested she contact the Canadian Society for Medical Laboratory Science (CSMLS) to find out the qualifications needed to work as a medical laboratory technologist in Canada.

CSMLS required Arcilla to have her foreign Bachelor of Medical Technology credential evaluated by ICES. CSMLS asked her to have a Comprehensive Report completed so it could understand the education she received in the Philippines, including information on the grading system used at the university she attended.

When ICES provided the report, CSMLS identified some additional courses that Arcilla needed to complete before writing her certification exams. Arcilla included her ICES Comprehensive Report with her application to a local college and was admitted. She completed the required courses and wrote the certification exam the same year. Arcilla is now a practising medical laboratory technologist at the same firm where she worked for years as a secretary.

ICES has heard thousands of stories like Arcilla's, and since its inception in 1995 has completed over 18,000 evaluation reports for nearly 25,000 clients, including individuals, employers, educational institutions, and government agencies. ICES evaluators are highly skilled, use well-established methodologies, and have research contacts around the world.

The contributions ICES makes to government, industry, and the education system are inevitably passed down to clients. ICES services and reports remove barriers to better job opportunities by helping employers understand credentials from other countries. The same ICES report helps remove barriers when an individual seeks recognition for their learning at an educational institution or wants to apply for a licence to practice their profession in Canada.

For more information on the International Credential Evaluation Service:

Web www.ola.ca/ices
Email icesinfo@ola.ca
Phone 604-431-3402
Toll-free 1-800-663-1663 ext 3402

In 2003, as part of the transition, the Open Learning Agency transferred two lines of business: Open School and the Canadian Learning Bank. The Ministry of Advanced Education's OLA wind-up plan will see more transition-related activities in 2003/2004.

OPEN SCHOOL

OLA's Open School division provided kindergarten through high-school (K–12) curriculum, improving access to basic education by developing flexible, learner-focused programs for delivery by distance or in the classroom. Open School offered resources based in print, television, and the Internet to school administrators, teachers, and students.

On April 1, 2003, Open School programs, products, and services were transferred to School District 40 in New Westminster, BC, and the Queen's Printer in Victoria, BC.

CANADIAN LEARNING BANK

The Canadian Learning Bank (CLB) offered the Credit Review Service (CRS), a unique national program designed to award academic credit to workplace-based training programs comparable to those offered at colleges and universities. The CLB also coordinated the Second Language Challenge Examinations program, offered to secondary school students throughout BC.

On April 1, 2003, CLB and CRS were transferred to the British Columbia Institute of Technology in Burnaby, BC.

WHAT WE DELIVERED

BRITISH COLUMBIA OPEN UNIVERSITY

Students	14,374
Graduates	968
Course enrolments	27,630
Full-time equivalents (FTEs)	2,896
Base funded	2,704
Non-base funded	192

INTERNATIONAL CREDENTIAL EVALUATION SERVICE

Evaluations of international credentials	4,105
Full-time equivalents (FTEs)	
Secondary	704
Post-secondary	4,153

KNOWLEDGE NETWORK

Average weekly reach (BBM Canada)	1,304,000
Partners in Knowledge	27,000

OLA SKILLS CENTRES

Students	2,810
Full-time equivalents (FTEs)	488
Job placements	7,656

OPEN SCHOOL

K–12 enrolments supported by Open School courses	57,290
Full-time equivalents (FTEs)	8,184

OLA STATEMENT OF REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE

	2003	2002
Revenue		
Province of BC		
Operating grant	$ 21,886,272	$ 20,087,519
Specified grants and contracts	8,921,872	10,243,717
Government of Canada grants and contracts	9,351,703	7,448,142
Other grants and contracts	867,881	757,617
Tuition and related fees	6,815,766	7,673,685
Sales	11,155,492	9,543,430
Donations and sponsorships	1,720,830	1,981,801
User fees and rentals	558,904	759,062
Interest	104,175	181,842
Miscellaneous	460,895	683,405
Amortization of deferred contributions	2,703,530	2,679,078
Total Revenue	**$ 64,547,320**	**$ 62,039,298**
Less Transfer to deferred contributions	(1,407,608)	(1,233,925)
Revenue, Net	**$ 63,139,712**	**$ 60,805,373**
Expenditure		
Salaries, honoraria, and benefits	$ 36,202,347	$ 32,491,325
Travel	681,437	847,157
Communications	703,701	749,707
Purchased services	8,483,514	9,475,346
Materials, supplies, and postage	6,485,351	7,464,168
Facilities, rental, and maintenance	2,334,912	2,462,866
Equipment rental, financing, and maintenance	931,564	1,390,159
Satellite transmission services	494,095	370,547
Program acquisitions	1,880,023	1,374,331
Other, net of recoveries	1,916,522	1,746,301
Amortization of capital assets	2,703,530	2,679,078
Total Expenses	**$ 62,816,996**	**$ 61,050,985**
Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenditure	322,716	(245,612)
Unrestricted net assets, beginning of year	339,581	585,193
Unrestricted Net Assets, End of Year	**$ 662,297**	**$ 339,581**

Corporate

Alcan Smelters and Chemicals Ltd.
Coast Whistler Hotel & Whistler Blackcomb
Crystal Cruises
Gardens West
Marine Link Tours
Opus Framing and Art Supplies
Sun Peaks Resort
Whistler Northwind

Government

BC Ministry of Children and Family Development
BC Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection
Canadian Heritage
College of New Caledonia (Lakes District)
Open Learning Agency
Parks Canada
Public Works and Government Services Canada
School District No. 38 (Richmond)

Community

Crofton House School
Okanagan Wine Festival Society
Science Council of British Columbia
St. George's School
Surrey Delta Immigrant Services Society
Vancouver Aquarium Marine Science Centre
Vancouver Art Gallery
Vancouver Maritime Museum

Partners In Knowledge

Anonymous (3)
Christopher Investments
Dr. Cortlandt Mackenzie
Mr. Rudolf Kaul
Producer's Circle ($1200+)

Star Performers ($600+)

Anonymous (6)
Mr. Derek Banks
Mr. Albert A. Brown
Miss Sharon Cooper
Cathy & Bob Crockett
Ms. Dorothy Deunch
Mr. & Mrs. David Devine
Mrs. Ethel Hatto
Ms. M. Raye McAllister
Mr. Millan G. McDonald
Ms. Frances C. McGrath
Mr. Donald Pooley
Mr. Bertram Turvey
Mr. Ali Yazdi

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2002/2003

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